

REMARKS

In response to a Non-final Office Action mailed March 12, 2010, reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Specification

The specification has been objected to due to improper formalities. In this response, Applicants amended the paragraph mentioned by the Examiner as well other paragraphs that contain typographical errors. Applicants further amended the specification to correct grammatical errors. No new matter has been introduced.

Tables 1 – 3 have also been amended to accurately describe a physical unit of kN, while changing “ejecting pressure” to ejection force. N (newton) is a unit of force defined by the International System of Units, or SI, and is commonly used worldwide. Thus, one of ordinary skill in the art should be able to recognize this symbol kN as kilonewton, a unit of force. No new matter has been introduced.

Status of the Claims

Claims 1-21 are pending. Claims 20 and 21 were withdrawn. Claims 1-19 were rejected. Claims 9 and 17 were objected to. In this response, claim 1 has been amended. Claim 22 has been added. Claims 2-14, 20 and 21 have been canceled without prejudice. No new matter has been added .

Claim Objections

Claim 9 was objected to due to a typographical error. In this response, claim 9 has been canceled.

Claim 17 was also objected to due to a grammatical error. However, Applicants noticed no such error in amended claim 17 which, was filed with the initial application on August 28, 2006,

and therefore finds no necessity to correct it. Applicants enclose Exhibit A that contains marked-up claim 17 as a reference and respectfully requests that the objection be withdrawn.

Statement of ownership

In response to paragraph No. 6 of the Office Action mailed March 12, 2010, Applicants hereby confirm that all claims disclosed in the current application were commonly owned at the time the invention was made.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 1-3, 6 and 12-19 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), as being unpatentable over Harada et al (JP 09-272901) in view of Skiles et al (US 6,169,059). Claims 1-3, 5-7, 10 and 12-16 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Harada in view of Murata (WO97/48783). Claims 4, 9 and 11 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Harada in view of Murata, and further in view of Lemmerman (1,967,830). Claim 8 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Harada in view of Murata, and further in view of Imai et al (US Pub 2003/0130138A1).

The rejections are respectfully traversed, and reconsideration is requested. Applicants have amended claim1 to further include the step of forming a hydrophilic coating on the molding portion by using at least one hydrophilic material selected from the group consisting of Al-O, TiO, Mg-O, Si-O and CaO. Support for this limitation can be found in paragraph [0061] and Tables 4 and 6 of the published application. No new matter has been introduced. None of the above cited references teaches or suggests forming a hydrophilic coating on the molding portion using the specific hydrophilic materials recited in claim 1. This process of forming a hydrophilic coating on the molding portion is critical to the present invention because it helps improve a wetting action of an aqueous solution on the surface of the molding portion.

Applicants further amended claim 1 to add a limitation that reads “wherein said aqueous solution is the one in which said water soluble lubricant is completely dissolved in water to have a concentration greater than or equal to 0.01 % by weight concentration but less than saturated

concentration.” This limitation was originally recited in claim 13 and has been incorporated into claim 1. Support can be found in paragraphs [0011], [0013], [0020] and [0052] of the published application. In the Office Action of March 12, 2010, the Examiner rejected claim 13 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), as being unpatentable over Harada in view of Skiles, while stating that Skiles teaches that the borax is dissolved in water at the range of concentration (0.1-0.2%) overlapped with the present invention. First, Harada does not disclose any lubricant. Second, amended claim 1 does not recite any borates, including borax disclosed by Skiles, as a water soluble lubricant. Accordingly, the 103(a) rejection of claim 13 and its limitation based on the combination of Harada and Skiles is moot. In the Office Action, claim 13 was also rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Harada in view of Murata. The Examiner asserts that “Murata teaches that the composition comprises 5 – 45% solids (lubricants), the rest being water....and that the surfactant comprises 0.2 to 05% of the lubricant” (Office Action, page 8). The “solids” disclosed by Murata contain not only solid lubricants, but also contain other materials including water-soluble inorganic salts, surfactants, and any solids in optional components (Murata, lines 5 to 28, page 8). Furthermore, Murata fails to disclose the “complete” dissolution of lubricants, merely stating that “the water-soluble inorganic salt was dissolved in water and the solid lubricant was then uniformly dispersed in this solution” (Murata, line 30-33, page 11). Thus, any combination of Harada and Murata would not make the limitation of claim 13, now incorporated in amended claim 1, obvious.

In addition, as shown in Table 6, a hydrophilic coating onto the surface of the molding portion allows metal powders to be molded at temperatures as high as 250° C. In other words, high temperature provides high-density molding products. However, if molding was attempted at 250° C without a hydrophilic coating, molding would not be possible due to the lubricant not being fully attached to the molding portion. Thus, the hydrophilic coating process provides the present invention with unexpected results, i.e., higher density, and effectively rebuts any *prima facie* case of obviousness. The above feature is recited in new claim 22. Support can be found in paragraphs [0061], [0073] and [0074] of the published application. No new matter has been introduced.

In light of argument above, claim 1 is nonobvious under any combination of prior art. Claims 15-19, and 22 directly or indirectly depend from independent claim 1. Accordingly, they are all nonobvious as well.

Thus, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) be withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

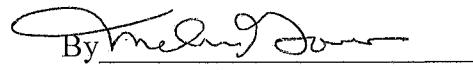
In view of the foregoing, each of the presently pending claims in this application is believed to be in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to pass this application to issue.

The Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number indicated below if the Examiner believes any issue can be resolved through either a Supplemental Response or an Examiner's Amendment.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any unpaid fees deemed required in connection with this submission, or to credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 50-4570.

Dated: September 10, 2010

Respectfully submitted,


By _____
Melvin C. Garner
Registration No.: 26,272
LEASON ELLIS LLP.
81 Main Street
White Plains, New York 10601
(914) 821-8005
(914) 288-0023 (Fax)
Attorneys/Agents For Applicant